

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 12-14 are pending. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended. No new matter is presented.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Clark (U.S. Patent No. 4,966,644). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the marker and sheet feeder are formed as a pair of feeding means for positioning in contact with each other when the marker is adhered to the predetermined sheet and separate from each other when sheets not receiving a marker are fed. As stated previously, Clark does not teach the instance in which the feeding means will be separated from each other when sheets not receiving a marker are fed. Thus, Clark fails to teach or suggest the features of claim 1.

Claims 2, 4 and 14 are allowable at least due to their dependency from claim 1. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clark in view of Applicants' admitted prior art. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 12 has also been amended to clarify that the marker and sheet feeder are formed as a pair of feeding means for positioning in contact with each other when the marker is adhered to the predetermined sheet and separate from each other when sheets not receiving a marker are fed. Clark fails to teach or suggest this feature and the prior art discussion in this application also fails to teach or suggest this feature. Thus, claim 12 is allowable in light of the above arguments.

Claim 13 is allowable at least due to its dependency from claim 12. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clark as applied to claims 1, 2, 4 and 14 above, and further in view of Vonderhorst et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,556,492). This rejection is respectfully traversed in light of the above remarks specifically pointing out that Clark does not teach that the marker and sheet feeder are formed as a pair of feeding means for positioning in contact with each other when the marker is adhered to the predetermined sheet and separate from each other when sheets not receiving a marker are fed. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clark as applied to claims 1, 2, 4 and 14 above and further in view of Nobile (U.S. Patent No. 5,390,594). This rejection is respectfully traversed in light of the above remarks specifically pointing out that Clark does not teach that the marker and sheet feeder are formed as a pair of feeding means for positioning in contact with each other when the marker is adhered to the predetermined sheet and separate from each other when sheets not receiving a marker are fed. Applicants request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Busk (U.S. Patent No. 3,245,859) in view of Lowe (U.S. Patent No. 3,926,713). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Busk and Lowe fail to teach or suggest the above-noted feature of claim 1 for the same reasons Clark fails to teach this feature. Lowe is not being relied upon as teaching this feature, and, Lowe does not in any event teach or suggest this feature.

The remaining rejections of claims 3, 5, 6, 9, 10 are respectfully traversed in light of the above remarks specifically pointing out that Busk and Lowe do not teach that the marker and

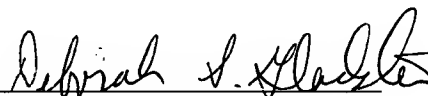
sheet feeder are formed as a pair of feeding means for positioning in contact with each other when the marker is adhered to the predetermined sheet and separate from each other when sheets not receiving a marker are fed. Accordingly, Applicants request that these rejections be withdrawn.

In the event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing 163852016000.

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